

MAR 24 2000

COUNCIL ANNETTE ISLANDS RESERVE

METLAKATLA INDIAN COMMUNITY

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March 13, 2000

Federal Caucus Comments Comment Record
C/o BPA-PI
707 W Main Street, Suite 500
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Federal Caucus:

The Metlakatla Indian Community has observed with great interest and some concern the proposals contained in and activities surrounding, the "All - H Paper" and other proposals for restoration of salmon and other species in the Columbia River basin. We have not taken the opportunity to date, to be involved in, or to closely monitor, activities surrounding the fishery restoration efforts on the Columbia. Recently, however, the proposals for restoration are becoming more far-reaching and now suggest a potential threat to our own fishing rights.

The Metlakatla Indian Community recognizes respects and supports the fishing rights of the Tribes on the Columbia system. It applauds the efforts the tribes have made to save their salmon and other species. We are in favor of all reasonable efforts to protect treaty-fishing rights. We are concerned, however, that federal agencies and other Columbia basin interests, to cover their own failures to protect fish and to avoid taking the actions that may be necessary closer to home, are suggesting restriction on fisheries far removed from and unrelated to the Columbia system.

In that regard, we want the record to reflect that the Metlakatla Indian Community has its own exclusive fishing rights on its Reserve in southern southeast Alaska. That fishery is well managed and has virtually no impact on Columbia River stocks. We want it understood that Metlakatla's fishery is as important legally and culturally as any tribal fishery on the Columbia. In the government's efforts to make a case for any of the restoration proposals now on the table, we want it known that it makes no sense legally or scientifically to sacrifice our tribal fishery in the false name of preserving another. We believe the Columbia River tribes will agree.

Sincerely,

Metlakatla Indian Community


Solomon D. Atkinson, Mayor